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"The Russian Army."

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LECTURE.

Friday, May 17th, 1872.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM J. CODRINGTON, G.C.B., in the Chair.

"THE RUSSIAN ARMY."

By Lieutenant CHARLES E. H. VINCENT, 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

Ere I enter upon the subject of the lecture that I am about to have the honour of delivering to you, it behoves me in a measure to explain my presumption in appearing in this theatre in other character than as one of the audience.

When I recently returned from Russia, I was no less flattered than surprised to receive an invitation from the Council of this Institution to read a paper on "The Russian Army."

Although my journey had been undertaken entirely at my own instigation and expense, in order to learn the language, I had been afforded such unusual opportunities of studying Russian military organisation, by the condescension, kindness, and courtesy of the Generals and regimental Officers quartered in Warsaw, that after some consideration I decided to avail myself of the privilege offered me by the Council; but, I did so only with the conviction that I might rely upon your kind indulgence to pardon any errors into which my inexperience might lead me, or any deficiency in capability of welding my matter into an interesting and complete form. I little thought, however, that I should be assigned the difficult task of replacing so able and experienced an Officer as Surgeon-Major Wyatt, whose inability to fulfil his engagement through indisposition you cannot fail to deplore less than I do myself, and I must further claim your consideration on account of the very short time that was allowed me to prepare my lecture.

Figures are stubborn, indigestible, and uninteresting facts; their citation must be wearisome to all, but unfortunately they are the only means by which numerical force can be designated, and, unless I err, numerical force is one of the chief features in the military organisation of a country. However, I will endeavour to be as sparing as possible in this particular.

Although in describing the Russian military organization I shall use the present tense, it is well that you should understand that some of the provisions relative to length of service, levying, reserves, &c., are only in contemplation, or exist only in theory; no time having elapsed for them to be put into practice.

How necessary army reform was in Russia you will readily comprehend, when I tell you that under the old system, the soldiery were taken exclusively from the very lowest class of peasantry, by a complicated system of forced service; that the Officers were deficient in number, character, and education; and that no defined system of reserves existed. The Reorganisation Commission has but just concluded its labours, and its measures still lack the Imperial sanction. However, there is sufficient reason to believe that they have adopted the primitive project of reform as laid down in the ukase of November 16, 1870, somewhat modified it may be, to justify my speaking of it as actually existing, although the whole system is really only *in transitu*.

Rather more than seventeen years ago, the Emperor Alexander II succeeded to the throne of All the Russias, vacant by the decease of his father Nicholas. The constant news of the bitter sufferings of the imperial troops, and of their adverse fortunes before the Allied Armies, served not to soothe the latter days of that austere monarch. On a camp bedstead, in a poorly furnished chamber, appointed by himself, in order to share in a measure the hardships of his soldiers, the Emperor Nicholas Ist breathed his last, and the autocracy of Russia passed into the hands of his more liberally-minded son.

The position of the Emperor Alexander Nicholasievitch,* on his accession, was one fraught with difficulty—engaged in a hopeless contest, which absolutely impeded all commerce and enterprise, and brought distress and ruin to nearly every door. Peace was a matter of necessity, and in little over a twelvemonth, the treaty of Paris checked hostilities, and freed Russia of the invader, without any serious concessions on the part of the defeated. On a long period of peace and prosperity the future of Russia now depended, and to carry out such a policy was the firm resolve of the Emperor.

A deep and searching inquiry into the evils existing in every civil and military institution; the consideration of the best means for removing them; and minor innovations, occupied some years, until on the 3rd of March, 1861, the decree went forth proclaiming the emancipation of the serfs from their dependency on their proprietors. That decree forms the great modern landmark in Russian history; it enables all owing allegiance to the Tsar to strive on terms of equality in the market of intellect and industry, and in future ages every Russian will have to look back to that decree as the true source of the greatness and prosperity of his country, and it will be for ever associated with

* The "vitch" after the name of a man signifies "the son of," and "efina" after the name of a woman, "the daughter of." Thus, "Alexander Nicholasievitch"—Alexander, the son of Nicholas; "Katerine Alexandreffina"—Catherine, the daughter of Alexander. It is the custom in Russia thus to address people, even strangers, without prefix or surname.

the name of its Imperial promulgator, and his faithful and zealous commissioners, the Generals Rostovzoff and Milutin.

But I must not permit myself to dwell longer on the civil administration of the Emperor Alexander. I must pass on at once to the remarkable reforms effected in the Army, which can only be spoken of with respect by Englishmen, when they think of the salient proofs of courage it gave, contending as it did in the Crimea against such fearful odds.

The Polish insurrection, and the campaigns in the Caucasus, were events almost forgotten when once over, and brought little teaching; but the war of 1866, and the mighty hosts which battled in the Bohemian arena, clearly indicated the necessity for securing on a firmer basis the constant supply of the proper complement of warriors to defend the honour, safety, and integrity of Holy Russia.

Austria lost no time in profiting by the lesson so direfully read her by Prussia, and Russia made equal haste to reap the benefit of the brilliant example of one rival, and the bitter experience of another. Accordingly, on the 16th of November, 1870, an imperial ukase was issued, proclaiming the liability to military service for every Russian male.

It now fell to the lot of the Minister of War, Infantry-General Milutin (brother of the emancipation commissioner), assisted by the aforementioned commission, to arrange the details of the new system, to organise and dispose the vast force thus obtained into separate bodies, affording each other mutual support, capable of immediate concentration, yet not so massed as to nationality or locality as to admit of the outburst of independent political feeling. But these were not easy conditions to carry out in a country extending over 7,770,882 square miles, with yet imperfect railway communications, with a male population of over 36,000,000, and with a portion of the empire decidedly disaffected. Were the new law of universal service to be carried out to the letter, and all males of a serviceable age called to arms, a force of some 6,000,000 would be the result, or 4,000,000, allowing a liberal margin for those physically unfit, or otherwise exempt.

Now an available army of 2,000,000 troops was justly considered sufficient to meet all due requirements of the empire, either for internal or external war, and a period of about ten years was allowed for it to reach that maximum number. It was, therefore, computed that an annual contingent of 25 per cent. of the youths who had attained their 21st year would furnish a sufficiently numerous body to keep up the standing army, to augment it to full war strength, and to keep it constantly supplied with fresh men, trained in the regular service, by the formation of strong and reliable reserves. But the remaining 75 per cent. will not be freed from their share in defending the soil, for, organised locally, and drilled periodically, they will be bound to serve till the completion of their 36th year in the militia, to whom in time of war the preservation of order in the interior, the garrisoning of the towns and fortresses, and the levying and training of the recruits for the field forces will be confided. Thus the whole of the bayonets composing the active army of the Tsar will be free to take the field against

a foreign foe. The selection of this more or less fortunate moiety, according to the feelings of the individual, will be decided by the drawing of lots; those that fall within the prescribed number being theoretically allowed no exemption by birth or fortune (practically a substitute will probably be obtained on the present terms, 800 roubles), although, of course, certain social and physical conditions may assign an available conscript at once to the militia, and preclude him from the drawing.

The period of service will extend over fifteen years, from the end of the 21st to the termination of the 36th year. In the case of those destined to serve in the regular army, seven or eight years will be spent with the standards, and the remainder with the reserve. Many, however, desire that the former period shall be reduced to five or six years, according to the capacity of the individual, so as to lessen the number of men on foot in time of peace, and that the soldier may go as soon as possible, and propound among the still benighted lower orders the teaching and education he has derived in his regimental experience. Although it is reasonable to suppose that five or six years is sufficient to form a soldier, the proposition is dreaded by those accustomed in their youth to see a soldier serve for life, or until incapacitated by wounds and infirmities.

The supreme direction of the Russian Army lies with the Emperor, who has his Chancery at the Ministry of War.

The Minister receives and prepares for His Majesty the reports of the twelve chief sections, among which the administration of the Army is divided. These twelve departments are—

1. The Imperial Chancery.
2. The Council of War.
3. The Superior Military Tribunal (Court of Cassation).
4. The Chancery of the Minister of War.
5. The Head-Quarter Staff, administering the cavalry and infantry, with their technical schools, and having all staff corps and institutions under immediate control.
6. The Intendance Department for the pay, supply, and clothing of the Army.
7. The Artillery Department, administering the artillery, with its technical schools.
8. The Engineer Department, likewise administering that branch, and controlling all matters connected with fortifications, and the quarters of troops.
9. The Army Medical Department.
10. The Educational Department, controlling only preparatory schools; technical academies being managed by their several departments.
11. The Administration of the Irregular Troops.
12. The Department of Military Justice.

Since 1864 Russia has been divided into fourteen military districts, besides the Cossack Province of the Don. These districts are—

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. St. Petersburg. | 8. Moscow. |
| 2. Finland. | 9. Kazan. |
| 3. Wilna. | 10. Caucasus. |
| 4. Warsaw. | 11. Orenburg. |
| 5. Kieff. | 12. West Siberia. |
| 6. Odessa. | 13. East Siberia. |
| 7. Harkoff. | 14. Turkestan. |

At the head of each district is a general Officer, who, if simultaneously invested with the civil administration, is termed "Lord Lieutenant" (*Namiestnik*) in Poland and the Caucasus; and in Finland, Wilna, Odessa, Siberia, and Turkestan, "Governor-General." The head-quarter staff is divided into—

1. The District Military Administration.
2. The Intendance Department for pay, supply, and clothing.
3. The District Artillery Department.
4. The District Engineer Department.
5. The District Medical Department.

Moreover in each military district there is a superintendent of the local troops, termed "local divisioner," and in each government a "local brigadier," who, besides commanding the local troops, is charged to keep the whereabouts of the men on furlough in view, and when occasion arises, with the levying of them.

We see, then, that the Army is distinctly divisible into three heads—

1. The Field Army, composed of the standing Army, augmented by its reserves of trained soldiers.
2. The Irregular Troops, consisting of both cavalry and infantry, and who are raised only in time of war.
3. The Militia or local forces, who have but a *cadre* peace establishment, and who may be supplemented to any extent by a *levée en masse* of the population.

It is, however, almost entirely the first category that must occupy us this afternoon, *i.e.*, the standing Army and its reserves.

The standing Army is composed of the troops of the Guard and the troops of the Army or line, the former possessing enormous privileges over the latter; in interchanging, rank in the Guards is two places higher than in the line, each composed of infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers. Although all, or nearly all of the regiments are designated by the names of localities or of illustrious personages, as well as by their regimental numbers, they are in no way tied to fixed localities, nor do they draw their recruits or receive their reserves from particular districts. No doubt much valuable influence of local pride, old association, and *esprit de corps* is thereby lost; but such a system is rendered partially necessary by the vast area of the country, the imperfect communication, and the disaffection of some provinces.

The tactical and administrative unit in time of peace, is the Division for cavalry and infantry, and the Brigade for artillery, engineers, and rifle corps. In time of war these several units are drawn into *corps*

d'armée, and the corps into armies, and employed as necessity and occasion require.

The field troops of the Russian Army are composed of 47 divisions of infantry, 8 brigades of rifles, 10 divisions of cavalry, 50 brigades of field artillery, 8 brigades of horse artillery, 5 brigades of engineers, with a numerical strength (according to semi-official, but not absolutely reliable documents) in time of peace of 33,043 Officers and 735,539 men, and in time of war of 43,355 Officers, and 1,358,672 men, with 1,656 guns.

The cost of each soldier is about £25 per annum, and the war budget amounts on an average to about £21,000,000 sterling.

I ask you, now, gentlemen, to associate yourselves with the conscript. According to your talents, physical appearance, and proportions, you are assigned to one of the arms of the service, and while superior mental faculties procure you admission to the scientific corps, a long thigh, and previous association with horses, will be your special qualification for the cavalry. The recruits for the cavalry of the guard are selected by the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch, the elder, himself. Recruiting in the provinces is not left to the local authorities, but is superintended in each district by a special Imperial Commissioner, appointed annually.

After six months' preliminary training with the district reserve battalion, squadron, or battery, where you receive your first uniform, you are appointed to a regiment. Unless personally gifted by nature, your lot lies with the Army; were it with the Guard, you would be housed in barracks, wooden sheds, truly, and with 70 or 80 comrades in the room, but yet more comfortably located than if billeted in a peasant's hut. The erection of barracks is projected for the whole Army, but it must be long ere they exist. Meanwhile the regiments are billeted in the towns, and when sufficient room is not to be had in one locality, they are quartered in contiguous villages. During the summer months, May to October, the whole regiment is brought together under canvas. Eight years (but shortly it will be less) you spend in this way, and then you cast aside the permanent military yoke, and repair to the reserve. Perfectly free in all your actions, you can reside where it pleases you, and change your residence at pleasure, being only required to signify your movements and actual address to the local authorities. On the outbreak of war you are summoned—if your address is known—and are attached to the nearest regiment at hand of your branch, where arms, clothes, and equipment sufficient for the complete war establishment lie in store. I said, "if your address is known," because it is feared that many a Muscovite warrior omits to give his correct address to the local authorities, and that on the call to arms, more than one voice would not be heard when the roll was read over on the day of rendezvous.

But absolving you from your connection with the Russian conscript, I must retrace my steps, and enter upon his regimental life. Docile and willing though he be to learn, hitherto fortune has not afforded the opportunity to him or to his fellows, and the long frosts and heavy snows of winter, which prevent all military exercise, besides an occa-

sional route march, must be taken advantage of, to instil the education so necessary to the welfare and social development of a people. Nearly every day, then, from November to March, for four or five hours, the Officers do the duty of schoolmasters, and the captain, or subaltern Officer under his direction, takes the greatest interest in the relative progress of his men. Periodical examinations take place, when a small prize in money, or the favourite spirit (oodki), or the accordence of some special privilege, is sufficient to excite the greatest emulation. The teaching (comprises arithmetic, reading, writing, and simple lectures on military art, illustrated on the black board.

But it may well be thought that in so poorly educated a body the difficulty of obtaining suitable Non-commissioned Officers must be immense. So it would be if the Russians had not met the difficulty in the face, and adopted such resolute measures as not only to counteract it, but also to form a body of men who, after the termination of their military service, are admirably suited for the posts of national school masters, the want of whom is one of the chief obstacles to the educational progress of the country. Forgive me, then, if I enter somewhat tediously on what is one of the most remarkable features in the Russian regimental organisation.

In every regiment of cavalry, or infantry, or battery of horse artillery, or brigade of field artillery, there exists a Non-commissioned Officer's school, conducted by two or three Officers entirely told off for that purpose. Such men, who are of good appearance and character, who can read, write, and sum, are eligible to enter the school, after two years' service, if they have attained the grade of Lance Corporal. Going through the school, however creditably, does not ensure promotion to the non-commissioned ranks, it only entitles to it; skill in arms, tact in command, and physical aptitude, are necessary qualifications for the first graduate. The course of study lasts two years; during the first, the more elementary subjects of education are attended to, such as history, geography, arithmetic, composition; and in the cavalry and artillery, elementary veterinary surgery, &c.: whereas during the second year the studies are more military, and include military history, field fortification, tactics, and also mathematics. You may smile at the word "mathematics," but you must recollect that the Russian Army is the school of the country, hence the necessity of giving a sound general education; and you would have been no less astonished than I was to see a pupil selected apparently indiscriminately by the General accompanying me, and ordered to bisect a given straight line, according to Euclid, on the black board. You would have been astonished, too, on entering a regimental school-room, to find the men listening to a lecture on tactics, and to see a relief-model of the environs; on inquiring its purpose, for the General to order two pupils to stand out, to hear him give them an extended operation to work, the one to advance with such an object against the other defending; to see painted tin models of companies and battalions at once worked, and when the General stopped the really sham fight, to hear each of the men in turn give a succinct account of his movements, dispositions, and intentions, corrected now and again by his

Officers, but never assisted; to see another man stand out and make his dispositions for throwing an advanced guard across the Vistula, describing them the while. Nor would your astonishment lessen when a fourth pupil described the general geographical features of England, enumerated our chief towns, traced the course of our rivers; when a fifth, starting from London, followed the track of a ship to St. Petersburg, naming the countries, their several capitals and sovereigns, by which he passed; when a sixth, starting from some far distant spot in Russia, traced the course by canals to St. Petersburg, enumerating the principal places on the route, and their capabilities for billeting troops.

You may think, gentlemen, that I am exaggerating, but you have, I am sure, but to steer eastward to have the opportunity of verifying my statements, met, as I know you will be, with the courtesy, hospitality, and frankness which distinguish Russian Officers. Meanwhile accept my facts. The pupils may have been selected, but I have no reason for supposing them to have been so, especially as I am not referring to any one particular regiment.

In the summer, field fortification is taught out of doors; but in the winter, when all earth is hidden by many feet of snow, a box about six feet by four, filled with sand, answers the purpose. In one class-room I saw this box, in it were various beautiful models of field works. I expressed a wish to see the pupils at work. In an instant the surface was as level as this table, the four first men stood out, and in twenty minutes, with tiny wooden scoops, a cavalier and a sunken battery were thrown up, with revetments as firm, and slopes as regular as all the time and all the skill of an army of engineers could make them. A sufficiently good scholar may pass at once into the first class, and thus absolve himself of the school in one year. The pupils are entirely separated from the men, living, sleeping, and eating apart, although they generally revert to their companies for the great annual manoeuvres. You can easily imagine what a highly trained set of Non-Commissioned Officers such a system must form.

A commission is within the reach of any non-commissioned Officer who passes the necessary examinations; if these examinations be passed and the commission not accepted, an annuity of about £15 is added to the pay during service.

I will now pass from the subject of education to that part of the soldier's life which he shares in common with all men, the amount he earns, and what he eats and drinks. Miserably paid, and almost worse fed on that which is not calculated to make men thrive, on black bread, on a sprinkling of meat, mixed up with rice and a herb which makes it sour; with "quass," a terrible sour, perfectly non-intoxicating beverage to drink, the Russian soldier flourishes, and so flourishes that he can endure almost anything. His spirits and good humour, too, never flag; and in every company, squadron, or battery, there is a musical troupe, who sing and dance admirably. When marching at 'ease, the troupe always goes in front, and enlivens the route by comic singing and curious antics, although they never lag or get in the way.

The question may be asked, is the discipline of the Russian Army all that it ought to be? If discipline is measured by the amount of crime, Russia yields the palm to no country. Drunkenness exists, but to no great extent. The men are honest (the company's cook goes alone to market to purchase the day's provisions) and submissive as individuals to any degree. Two or three prisoners in the morning is not an excessive allowance to three battalions. Is discipline, then, to be estimated by the respect shown to Officers? Again Russia is nothing behind, for saluting and military attitude in address is never disregarded.

But now and again you are confidentially told that the orthodox cry of Russian soldiery when ordered to execute something, "we gladly obey" ("Radi staratsyah"), comes out sulkily or is replaced by a dull growl. I dare make no assertion on this score; but in speaking of discipline, we must speak of the Officers, on whom it so much depends. I would that I could avoid mentioning them. For all the kindness and hospitality they showed me, and which I can never forget, they are justly entitled to the warmest expressions of my thanks, yet I must honestly state my opinion, and I know them to be too right-minded to misinterpret my sentiments.

The non-existence of what the Germans call the "Kleincadel," and we the squirearchy of a *haute bourgeoisie*, a class blessed with small pecuniary means, yet endowed with the proudest patrician feelings, renders the question of officering the Russian Army one of most serious difficulty. Although Russia is essentially a military nation, where uniform is the only passport, the attractions of the bar, of commerce, of literature, and of art, are every year luring more and more Officers to change their ill-paid and hard worked profession. Ere long, the Government will have to take very stringent measures, for now at least 5,000 Officers are wanting, and principally in the scientific corps, whose members have been called away to construct and superintend the new railways, roads, and bridges all over the country. Another very serious element in the present Officers of the Russian Army is the number of Germans, whose presence in certain contingencies would be a great embarrassment; but they could ill be spared, either as to ability or numbers.

I will not ask you to follow me through the entire curriculum of an Officer's studies; suffice it to say that military preparatory schools exist in great numbers, and receive pupils from a very early age. Those who decide on the military career, proceed at about 16 to one of the technical schools, from whence at the age of 19 or 20, having passed the ordeals which block every stage, they obtain their ensigncy, then follow the various grades without further examination. A second captaincy is reached in about eight years' service, and then merit may give the epaulettes of a general in a very short time (*i.e.*, 9 or 10 years), or you may be left to languish in command of a company or battalion, awaiting the gazette and the promotion, which never come.

An effort is being made to assimilate the off-duty life of Russian Officers with our own, by the establishment of regimental messes, but expense and the habits of the country put great difficulties in the way. Forbidden on any account to appear out of uniform within the confines

of the empire, as Russian Officers are, the reputation of the entire class frequently suffers from the delinquencies of a few members, and would those agitators who desire to see British Officers wear their uniform in public but visit a few of those places of more popular than proper entertainment abroad, and there witness the scenes they wish to reproduce in these islands, English Officers would have little cause to fear that one day the outward sign of H.M.'s commission, the uniform, the coat of honour, will lose the influence and prestige it now possesses, by too frequent and vulgar association.

I said just now that the Officers themselves instructed the men. Now it is quite open to doubt whether employment in such non-military capacities, and the constant intercourse therein involved, add to their reputation with the men, and the respect in which they are held.

It is curious how far the usages of society between equals are observed between the Officers and the men. A subaltern drilling a ride or a squad, a Captain inspecting his company, a Commanding Officer holding a parade, a General reviewing his brigade or division, always commences with the salutation "Zdaróvyah rebarta" (good health my children), to which the men reply, "We wish it also" (adding the title of the Officer they address), and when on Imperial parades, the cry, "We wish good health also to your Imperial Majesty" (Zdarovyah jeliém váše Imperátorsko veléchestvo) peals forth from forty thousand throats, the effect is superb. Yet the inconvenience of having to greet each individual soldier in your path must be great.

The degree of education possessed by Russian Officers varies considerably between the Guard and the Army. The supposition that every Russian Officer is a good linguist is entirely erroneous. In the cavalry of the Guard, nearly all know French colloquially, many speak German, but few can write grammatically in either language. In the infantry of the Guard, such knowledge exists in a smaller proportion, and in the troops of the Army it is a very great exception to meet an Officer conversant with a foreign language.* The theoretical training of young Officers is but little attended to, though the practical teaching is very extended. In some garrisons and towns, military conferences are held, and but little else is done at present. Candidates for the Staff are required to pass through the Nicholas Staff Academy at St. Petersburg; but the number who offer themselves is so comparatively small, that many Staff Officers have to be appointed directly from their regiments. It is in the numerical and intellectual deficiency of Staff Officers that one of the weakest points of the Russian Army lies. By a recent regulation, promotions in the Staff corps will not take place without an interregnum of regimental duty.

In the case of first commissions there is no probationary period, but an Officer of the Army desiring to enter the Guards, by which he loses two ranks in seniority, is put on his social trial for six months, during which he wears his old uniform before he is definitely accepted. Promotion goes

* The fact that their language embraces nearly all the sounds of European tongues enables Russians to acquire a far greater purity of accent in foreign dialects than is attainable by other nations, and hence the foundation of the popular error.

by seniority up to the grade of Lieutenant-Colonel, whence it is so entirely by selection that none have access to the seniority lists. There is no printed nominal roll of the Officers. About six weeks' leave of absence is granted annually, but the accumulation of two or three years is frequently taken advantage of for purposes of foreign travel. The pay is miserably small, although increased of late, but it is supplemented by periodical pecuniary rewards for the satisfactory performance of duty. Another rather curious custom is the giving of orders and decorations; yet the pay is so small that perhaps it is necessary to establish some equivalent. The breast of many a youth who has never seen a shot fired in earnest, glitters with ribbons and orders, though lacking the cross-swords which distinguish those obtained in the field. The possession of one order for a certain length of time entitles to another, and so on. The desire to obtain these flimsy ornaments is astonishing, and is well illustrated by the reply of a young, rich, and smart Officer of Cavalry to my query as to why he accepted the monotonous post of quartermaster (the regimental paymaster and quartermaster are appointed by the Commanding Officer from the subaltern rank, and held during his pleasure), "*C'est evident on peut obtenir des décorations;*" one or two years in such a post entitling him to some order, which in time would be supplemented by a handful. Russian Officers are allowed to marry, but must first deposit 5,000 roubles as a guarantee that they possess the means.

There are four departments, which belong to every branch of the service, the Ecclesiastical, the Transport and Commissariat, and the Medical. To every regiment and battery is attached a clergyman; and in every barrack or camp is an appointed place for divine worship. Attendance is entirely voluntary, but there are very few absentees. The Russian soldier shares the religious character of his countrymen. A church in sight, and the soldier, the sailor, no less than persons of their class in other walks of life, will take off their caps and devoutly cross themselves. Few men, and no company, squadron, battery, or regiment are without their patron saint, whose image they always keep near them. On the march and in the field, this picture has its place in the baggage waggons, and at nightfall, be it where it may, it is surrounded by devout worshippers, whose prayers are led by a chosen non-commissioned Officer.

It is in the solution of that difficult problem, "Army Transport," that General Milutin has perhaps excelled. In Russia all military transport is managed by the several corps. Every cavalry regiment has its waggons, in peace and war, at the rate of one transport waggon per squadron, for six days' provision, and one ammunition waggon per regiment, with 30 rounds for each carbine, and 20 for each pistol. Every infantry regiment has its one three-horse transport and one ammunition waggon per company; the horses belonging to the regiment and being driven and looked after by them. In peace, but one waggon, and that horsed by only two horses, is kept up per company. If the Officers cannot find room for their baggage on the squadron or company-waggons, or on the one extra allowed them, they are per-

mitted to have their own conveyances. The horses are generally driven in hand by one soldier. The transport waggon contains provisions for six days, and the ammunition waggon 40 rounds per man. Besides the one transport and the one ammunition-waggon per company, each regiment has an orderly-room waggon,—which contains the lithographing press, by which all regimental orders are printed and sent to each Officer—preventing the necessity of playing hide and seek with the orderly corporal,—the pay-office waggon, four ambulances, one hospital cart, one medicine cart, and the 1st regiment of each division; a band-waggon, but these are horsed only in time of war.

With regard to the Commissariat, it is impossible to say how far it is prepared to stand the test of an external campaign.

Although the deficiency of medical officers is very serious (but much less so than during the Crimean war), the Medical Department of the Russian Army is well administered, or rather, the regulations which govern it, are wise and provident. To provide a due number of surgeons, the Government gives a free education at the medical college at St. Petersburg to such students as engage to serve three years in the Army when called upon. In the field each company is attended by an apothecary provided with proper medicaments and surgical appliances, besides which the officers' servants and unarmed men are formed into a body, working in action by companies, taught and instructed in the leading principles of military surgery, and drilled periodically in the most approved methods of removing the wounded from the field, and affording them temporary relief. Moreover, in many regiments, the senior surgeon gives periodical lectures to the Officers and men on the first steps to be taken when wounded if skilled assistance be not at hand—a system, the utility of which it is not for me to enlarge upon—and it is in contemplation to provide each man with a roll of lint. The present sanitary condition of the Russian Army is considered to be in all respects satisfactory, although consumption and rheumatism brought on by the poor lodging-accommodation of the troops, are decidedly on the increase. All slight cases are treated in the regimental hospitals, whereas specific and serious diseases are sent to the divisional hospitals.

Here I take the liberty of giving expression to a passing idea of my own, which found some favour with those to whom I mentioned it abroad, but regarding the utility or practicability of which, I can give no opinion. It being the unanimous opinion of those who have been through the late wars that the brassard on the arms of the Army Hospital Corps and surgeons, the red cross on ambulances, and the flag of the Geneva Convention, are not sufficiently conspicuous to protect the trains of wounded and those engaged in succouring them, from fire, in the mist and confusion of combat, and it being highly desirable in the merest interests of humanity to prevent such destruction as far as possible, that an international convention be proposed to clothe all surgeons, hospital assistants, apothecaries, bearers of the wounded, and drivers of ambulances in a tunic of white or other conspicuous colour, entirely peculiar to them, with trousers of a colour peculiar to each nation, to prevent persons in this, so to say, neutral garb getting through the outposts and obtaining information of the movements and intentions of

the enemy; that all ambulances be painted white, and horsed solely with white or grey horses, which must consequently be excluded from the other branches of the Service, and used as chargers by surgeons and unarmed men, employed solely on the field to look after the wounded. All fire on persons wearing the uniform agreed upon, or upon waggons thus painted and horsed, to be strictly forbidden.

I am well aware that such a proposition cannot find favour with many, and notably with the gallant Scots' Greys and the Grey Battery, but I venture to submit that such a conspicuous colour is unsuitable for field operations, and the proof of it lies in the exclusion of white or grey horses from the French service,—while they were formerly employed, almost exclusively, by the Army Reorganization Committee, —on account of the mark they offered for artillery fire during the late war, and their evident unsuitability for vedette duty. In Prussia and Austria but few grey horses are used in military service, and in Russia the country is comparatively destitute of them.

I now propose briefly to treat on the separate details of each arm of the Service, its armament, equipment, and peculiar character, having already endeavoured to set before you the points they share in common.

The Infantry

as the most important, the most numerous, and the most efficient arm of the Service, shall first occupy our attention.

The Russian footmen, ready to spring into action at the signal of the Tsar, are composed of:—

- 10 Regiments of guards, each with 3 battalions.
- 14 Regiments, of 3 battalions of Grenadiers, of which 2 regiments are attached to the Guard.
- 4 Caucasian regiments, of 4 battalions of Grenadiers.
- 148 Regiments, of 3 battalions, of Infantry of the Line.
- 12 Caucasian regiments of infantry of 4 battalions.
- 4 Battalions of Rifles of the Guard.
- 20 Battalions of Rifles of the Line.
- 4 Caucasian Rifle battalions.
- 4 Turkestan Rifle battalions, therefore 188 regiments, with 580 Infantry and 32 Rifle battalions, massed into 3 Divisions of Infantry of the Guard.
- 4 Divisions of Grenadiers.
- 40 Divisions of Infantry of the Line, each of about 12,000 combatants.
- 8 Brigades of Rifles.

Every battalion of infantry consists of four companies and one rifle company. When the three battalions parade together, the rifle companies, each bearing the number of its battalion, are brought together into one battalion. The companies are numbered successively throughout the regiment. Thus the first battalion has companies 1 to 4; the second 4 to 8; and the third 8 to 12. The regiment is commanded by a Major-General in the Guards, and by a full Colonel in the Army,

and each battalion has a Lieutenant-Colonel at its head. The regimental staff consists of—

- 4 Field Officers, 1 Commanding Rifle Battalion, a Regimental Adjutant, a Paymaster, Quartermaster, Musketry Instructor, an Officer in command of the non-combatant company, a Drum-Major, a Trumpet-Major, 1 Surgeon-Major, and 3 Assistant-Surgeons, 1 or 2 Chaplains, and the non-combatant company, in which are clerks, mechanics, train soldiers, and Officers' servants.

The battalion staff consists of—

A Battalion Adjutant, a Battalion Drum- and Trumpet-Major, and a trained Apothecary.

The strength of a battalion of Infantry is regulated by four scales—

- (a.) The war strength, with 900 rank and file, of whom 60 are unarmed in reserve.
- (b.) The augmented peace establishment with 680 rank and file, of whom 40 are unarmed in reserve.
- (c.) The peace establishment with 500 rank and file, of whom 20 are unarmed in reserve.
- (d.) The cadre establishment with 320 rank and file.

According to these four standards, the number of Officers and Non-commissioned Officers is determined. A Captain or second Captain is in command of a company, with a Lieutenant, Sub-lieutenant, and Ensign. In time of peace one of these Officers can always be on leave at a time.

On the war establishment a company consists of—

- 1 Junker (a candidate for a commission, qualifying for it in the ranks instead of at the War School).
- 4 Senior Sergeants.
- 12 Junior Non-commissioned Officers.
- 20 Lance Corporals.
- 148 Privates.
- 1 Pay-Sergeant.
- 3 Drummers.
- 3 Buglers.
- 1 Armourer Sergeant.
- 12 Privates in reserve.
- 1 Apothecary and 1 apothecary pupil.
- 4 Officers' servants.

In all 211 non-commissioned Officers and men. The rifle companies have an additional Subaltern and Officers' servant, 5 buglers and no drummers.

The Russian infantry is at present armed with the Krinck converted rifle, but the Berdan breechloader will shortly be issued. The rifles of all but the rifle companies, and eight picked shots per company, whose sights are adjusted to 1,200 yards, are sighted only up to 600 yards, to prevent that chance-shooting at impossible ranges in which the French troops during the late war wasted their ammunition. The men carry 90 rounds apiece, 15 in a pouch on each side of the clasp of the waistbelt, and 60 in the havresack, besides which 40 rounds per man are carried in the company transport waggon, and 60 more with

the artillery reserve. Bayonets are always kept fixed, and besides the bayonet the troops have a short sword so adjusted as not to bump against the leg on the march. The uniform is grey, the field head-dress a small chaco, the belts and straps are white in the Guard, except the rifle companies, who have black, and in the Army all wear black. The knapsack is smallish, but heavy. Altogether the soldier carries 68 lbs., including his three days' provision. The Officers and colour sergeant have a curved sword, and a pistol in a black leather case on the right hand side of the belt. The regimental colour is carried by the most distinguished non-commissioned Officer.

It is improbable that the Russian infantry soldier has any rival on the march. With their trousers tucked into their long boots, the troops step out so fast that if once 100 yards ahead of you, no walking effort will catch them, and thus they can go on day after day, existing on food which would leave our men to starve. Their proficiency, too, in gymnastic exercises is very great. Nor is this confined solely to the infantry; for there is no barrack room throughout the service which is not furnished with a wooden horse and parallel bars, on which the company practise daily throughout the winter under their Officers, and in summer, regular gymnastic apparatus is established on every camping ground. The feats they perform, fully accoutred, cavalry soldier as well as infantry, are truly wonderful. At the bayonet exercise, also, their proficiency is of no mean order, for, stimulated by small prizes, they have the most exciting matches with each other; and to teach them to thrust accurately, a straw ball is suspended from the ceiling, and the men compete, under direction, in striving to make it swing straight by a direct centre thrust. They also practise thrusting at a straw figure, behind which the instructor stands parrying the blows.

The movements of the Russian infantry are very loose, though very rapid. For instance in wheeling upon a pivot the men scramble to their places on the word "march." The drill is supposed to be based upon that practised at the Model Battalion, to which one man is sent annually per battalion for two years.

The order of march is generally in column of sections, though movements in fours are frequently performed. The Captain of a company is in front, attended by the bugler and "jalonneur," or marker, who has a small flag fixed into the muzzle of his rifle. Each company has a different coloured flag, and the number of the company thereon. In camp it is placed in the ground in front of the tent of the Company Commander. A subaltern is on the right of each section.

To prevent the men falling into the habit of halting before an enemy by doing so in peace manœuvres, when friendly foes meet, the men charge through each other, holding their rifles perpendicularly aloft. Many a little accident frequently results from a falling bayonet, but the men never lose their temper and they enjoy the fun. On one occasion, when visiting the Lithuanian Regiment of the Guard with their Commandant, General Baron Korff, his Excellency asked me what companies I should like to see turned out. Being pressed, I said the rifle companies of the two first battalions. He had the calls sounded, and

in two minutes the companies with their Officers were falling in on their private parades; in three, they were doubling towards the centre of the enormous square from opposite corners of the barracks, in fire, the respective commands "front and rear turn" brought them into collision. Over went at least twenty on the slippery ice and snow, but in another minute both companies were doubling back by sections to their parades. In eight minutes from the time the bugle sounded, the men were dismissed, had deposited their arms, and were on their way to the canteen each to drink the glass of *vodka* given them by the General. There is a regimental canteen, but on a very primitive scale; for out of the farthing or so per diem that the Russian soldiers clear, there is not much margin for extravagance, nor do they want much, for they don't smoke, and only drink periodically.

Throughout the summer months infantry regiments are encamped, and then all sorts of manœuvres take place; but even in winter the bugle sometimes sounds at sunrise for a company to turn out, and off it is instantly sent to a distance of 20 or 30 versts ($\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile). At noon another is dispatched to intercept its return. The General rides out to witness the *rencontre*, which he criticises in that night's orders.

This last winter the troops at St. Petersburg marched by brigades 80 miles out and 80 in, being but a week absent. They took their provisions with them, and were billeted at night in the villages. Although the thermometer had never risen much above zero, Fahr., the appearance of one brigade on parade at 2 o'clock, before the Emperor, on the day it came in (having done the last stage that morning), was admirable, both as to men and horses. The men were clean, and marched past as freshly as if just out of their beds.

I have already mentioned the company-transport, the company organisation for providing for the wounded; but to a yet greater degree does General Milutin endeavour to perfect the Russian infantry. Ten men per regiment are attached annually to the field artillery for six months, so that there are always at least 80 men per regiment fit to do duty as artillerymen in case of need, and eight men per company carry intrenching tools between them, and have been instructed in throwing up temporary works. The Russian soldier is very handy, most men can use the hatchet (all wooden buildings in Russia are erected with the hatchet alone, without saw or hammer), cook, and sew. All the clothing is made up and fitted in the companies, even to the spinning of the braid. Every soldier, of whatever arm, has four uniforms, all of the same pattern, though of different dates of issue. The recruit receives a complete suit of uniform, known as No. 1; in the second year of his service this becomes No. 2, and is worn on ordinary occasions, No. 1, the new suit, being reserved for high days and festivals. In the third year the oldest suit is known as No. 3, and does for barrack and rough wear, No. 2 being worn on regimental parades, and No. 1 still being in the place of honour. Again each suit rises a number, No. 4 being reserved only for barrack wear, No. 3 for rough work No. 2 for the town and regimental parades, and No. 1 for Grand Ducal inspections. At the end of the fourth year all that is left of No. 4 becomes the property of the soldier.

You may see, from what I have said above, how independent of the other arms the Russian infantry is; how it contains within itself all it can need; how neither summer suns nor winter snows impair its training; and with what justice does the 'Tsar pride himself on the efficiency of his foot soldiers.

Cavalry.

The Cavalry of the Russian Army is composed of—

- 10 regiments of cavalry of the Guard.
- 18 regiments of Dragoons.
- 14 regiments of Lancers.
- 14 regiments of Hussars.

Thus, 56 regiments, with 224 combatant squadrons, are massed into—

- 2 divisions of cavalry of the Guard,
- 7 divisions of cavalry of the Line,
- 1 division of Caucasian Dragoons,

with a numerical strength of about 32,000 combatants, which, however, can be augmented to almost any extent by the incorporation of the irregular cavalry.

At the head of each regiment of the Guard is a Major-General; of the line, a Colonel. Two squadrons form a regimental division, or wing, commanded by a Lieutenant-Colonel.

The regiment of regular Russian cavalry is composed of five squadrons, the first four being combatant, and the fifth, commanded by a Captain selected by the election of his compeers, a *dépôt* squadron, quartered apart from the regiment, in some suitable locality for the supply of horses, charged with the preliminary training of recruits in peace and in war, and the purchase and breaking of remounts. Government haras have lately been established in the steppes of Little Russia, where the luxuriant pasturage provides great facilities for the breeding of horses; but at present the cavalry is largely dependent on private dealers, who come and offer their horses to the Captain of the reserve squadrons.

The difficulty of forming a cavalry soldier being so much greater than that of training an infantry man, cavalry regiments are kept so nearly on their war footing, that a contingent of about 50 men and horses would bring most of them up to their due complement for the field, a system which would, in the event of war, enable the cavalry to be pushed forward to protect the frontier from the very moment of the declaration of hostilities; it will be remembered how great an advantage the Prussians thereby derived on the outbreak of the late campaign.

The Russian squadron is divided into four sections, each commanded by a subaltern, who is responsible to the squadron leader for its due efficiency, as the latter is to the Colonel for the squadron.

The squadron numbers 148 mounted Non-commissioned Officers and men, 44 dismounted Non-commissioned Officers and men, and 7 Officers.

The regimental staff is the same as in the infantry, with the addition of a veterinary surgeon.

From £20 to £27 is about the price paid for remounts. The remounts may be purchased at any age between 4 and 12, but at the termination of the 12th year they must be cast, nor are they taken on the strength of the regiment until rising six; and it is indeed necessary that they should be in the prime of life during army service, for no comfortable stable, nothing but wooden sheds, protect the horses of the Russian cavalry from the wintry blast. Standing on an average about 15·2, with short thick-set legs, they perform prodigies, in spite of the heavy weight they have to carry. Four feeds of corn, hay at morning and night, and water four times per diem, *ad libitum*, keep them in excellent condition; and being admirably groomed, always bedded down with straw, without rack chain or other head-gear besides the halter, with the horse accoutrements hanging at the end of the stall, and the horse's name, age at which purchased, when, and by whom, and the name of the rider, engraved on a bright tin plate over each stall, a visit to a cavalry stable is a most agreeable sight, for the whole of the horses of the squadron are together.

It cannot, however, be denied that influenza, which in its aggravated form turns to typhus, is occasionally epidemic in the winter; but sore backs are totally, I say totally, unknown, and why is this? The saddle, though cumbersome and heavy, never hurts the horse. Four separate folds of soft felt, each $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, support a wooden frame previously fitted to the horse's bare back; on the wooden frame is strapped the horse rug, and the saddle is complete. The folds of felt being interchangeable, when one is wet or hardened by dried perspiration, it is turned round or placed on the top of the other, so that a perfectly clean soft material is always next the horse's skin. It is like re-stuffing a saddle every day. Girth-galls are, too, quite unknown, for one "inch" strap is sufficient to secure the wooden frame and the folds underneath, and one over the blanket and saddle, makes the whole perfectly firm. No martingales or cruppers are used, and the horses tails are allowed almost to touch the ground, to enable them to brush away the flies which torment them in the summer. An improvement is shortly promised in the bridles, but at present they are clumsy and heavy. The men always ride on the curb, except in the manège, when the simple bidoon is frequently used.

From the horses we must now pass to the men they have to carry. Of considerable stature, they have not been selected as light weights, nor are their accoutrements designed to ease the horse's back; and it is somewhat astonishing to find a hussar mounted and equipped with his saddle, appointments, forage, and provision for three days, weighing over 25 stone (360 lbs.), when we are told that speed is nowadays the first qualification for cavalry.

In point of armament the Russian cavalry is somewhat behind the age, although, as in the other branches of the Service, speedy reform is promised. A curved sabre, a pistol issued in 1839, and which no one would dare fire, and a lance for the front rank men of all regiments, hussars and cuirassiers included—even in lancer regiments the

front rank only of each squadron is provided with lances—complete the weapons possessed by the Russian cavalry men. A Berdan carbine and a revolver for each man are, however, spoken of.

In personal equipment the Russian cavalry soldier differs but little from other Continental troops, boots and pantaloons being almost universal.

As to drill I am incompetent to speak besides that the cavalry move in threes, and that the riding-school drill is exactly the same as our own; but manœuvres, squadron against squadron, division against division, and regiments against regiments, besides much practice in outpost and vedette duty are carried on throughout the summer months. As to smartness, I saw a squadron of Lancers, with every man in full marching order, every horse saddled and bridled, ready in 6½ minutes from the time the Commanding Officer entered the stable quite unexpectedly, found the men lounging about and gave the alarm.

The men ride well as a rule, but the Grand Duke Nicholas, Inspector-General of Cavalry, is constantly endeavouring to improve the equestrian talent of the Officers. At the Grand Ducal inspections, every Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer and man, passes singly before His Imperial Highness, and there are but few defects even in individuals that are not discovered.

I cannot omit to mention one point about the Russian cavalry, which is peculiar to them, and which might avail them much in the field; I mean the dragoons, who are simply mounted infantry. When it is desirable for them to act on foot, one man in three is left to hold two horses, and then unencumbered by spurs or dangling swords, but armed with rifles, they perform infantry work with the greatest efficiency. The command of the horse detachment is entrusted to the senior subaltern, who has orders to keep as far as possible under cover, yet to keep as near as possible to the dragoons acting on foot, in order that the words "to horse" may be almost immediately put into execution, in order to charge disheartened infantry, to meet cavalry face to face, or to retire swiftly before superior numbers.

Artillery.

The artillery is the arm of the Service on which many Russian Officers specially pride themselves. Were I an artilleryman I might possibly be able to say why with greater exactitude; however, I will let you judge for yourselves.

The Russian artillery consists of—

- 3 Brigades of field artillery of the Guard.
- 4 Brigades of Grenadier field artillery.
- 43 Brigades of Army field artillery.
- 1 Brigade of horse artillery of the Guard.
- 7 Brigades of Army horse artillery; or,
- 48 Rifled 9-pounder batteries.
- 105 Rifled 4-pounder batteries.
- 2 3-pounder mountain batteries.

50 Batteries of mitrailleuses.

18 Rifled 4-pounder batteries for horse artillery ;

i.e., 1,400 cannon and 400 mitrailleuses.

Each field brigade of artillery is composed of two 4-pounder and one 9-pounder battery of eight guns each, in all twenty-four guns, and is attached to a division of infantry, thus giving two guns per 1,000 men ; a number deemed very insufficient for a European campaign. It is therefore in contemplation to add another battery to each brigade, but whether this battery shall be of mitrailleuses is not yet decided. A brigade of horse artillery is attached to each division of cavalry in the field.

As in the battalion of infantry, there are various scales for the strength of a battery, viz. :—

(a.) The war establishment, when all the guns and ammunition carts are horsed, and the complement of men for five sub-divisions of which the fifth is held in reserve, is complete.

(b.) The augmented peace establishment, when all the guns, but only eight ammunition carts per battery are horsed, and there are but sufficient men for four sub-divisions.

(c.) The peace establishment, when but four guns and two ammunition carts (or four in the Guard) per battery are horsed. The four sub-divisions are kept up, but consist of fewer men.

The strength of a 4-pounder field battery on the war establishment is—

6 Officers.

255 Non-commissioned Officers and men.

160 Horses.

16 Ammunition carts, two to each gun.

2 Baggage waggons.

4 Waggons, artillery park, including a field forge.

1 Ambulance.

The 9-pounder battery has an addition of 61 men, 54 horses, 8 ammunition carts, and 1 park waggon.

The horse artillery 4-pounder battery has—

7 Officers.

330 Men.

324 Horses.

16 Ammunition carts, 2 baggage, 4 park, 1 ambulance, and 1 spare waggon.

Every battery has eight guns, and is divided into two divisions and four sub-divisions ; and although the guns are nominally 9- and 4-pounders, they throw a considerably heavier projectile than guns of the same nominal calibre in other services. But still the Russians possess no field-piece capable of coping with our new 16-pounder. The Russian cannon are bronze breech-loaders.* Although they in no way deny the superiority of steel for gun metal, they retain bronze, as they are able to manufacture and repair the guns made of it in their own

* There are some steel field artillery guns in store, but they will only be issued in the event of war. Their number is not publicly known, but it is believed to be about 400.

arsenals, whereas they would be almost entirely dependent on Krupp's factory in Prussia if they adopted steel. I believe, however, that one factory of steel guns for heavy ordnance has been established.

Their retention, too, of the breech-loading system for field artillery is explained by the use of bronze guns, even if the oft-quoted expression that *Prussia* has breech-loading cannon, therefore that system must be the best, did not offer sufficient reason, for the irregularities of the bore after the bronze gun is heated, put serious difficulties in the way of muzzle-loading, added to the increase of windage. The bronze gun is but ill to be depended upon after from one to two hundred rounds, when it usually has to be returned to the arsenal to be re-cast.

I spoke just now of ammunition-carts. I said "carts" advisedly, instead of waggons, for the ammunition of the Russian artillery is carried in two-wheel carts, drawn by three horses abreast, the driver riding the near horse—a system entirely peculiar to Russia. So many disadvantages attend these caissons that I can but think that they must more than counterbalance the advantages, if any indeed exist besides the smaller space they occupy on the line of march; a wheel coming off, or the centre horse, who is in the shafts, falling, and the disaster must be complete; and not least of all, the driver must be a man of extraordinary muscle if he can control three horses, and two in one hand, with plain bidoon bits. The result frequently is that when the battery is brought suddenly into action, the three horses of the caisson are seen galloping beyond control in a contrary direction, with their precious load behind them. The body of the ammunition cart consists of a box, about 4 feet by 3, and 2 deep, divided into compartments, each holding, in the case of the 9-pounders, 34 rounds, and, as three belong to each gun, and 18 rounds (16 common shells, and 2 mitraille) are in the gun-limber, 120 rounds are available, or 130 in the case of the 4-pounder field or horse artillery gun.

As the lid of the caisson can only be opened as a whole, and it is necessary to use some exertion to open it, the delay must be serious in getting the ammunition out, if it be opened each time; yet if left open the remaining rounds would get wet if in bad weather. In the field, a spade, pick, and six fascines are carried behind each caisson, to throw up a hasty revetment or make a wide ditch passable.

With the artillery park or reserve are further conveyed—

180	rounds for each	9 pounder.
170	"	" 4 "
60	"	" Infantry rifle.
20	"	" Dragoon "
10	"	" pistol and barrack rifle.

These are so packed that the supply for a regiment, battery, or squadron can be instantly taken out and sent to the front.

As regards manœuvring, I am incompetent to speak, but I may say that I saw a battery of Horse Artillery drilling admirably on ground so slippery that a man could hardly keep his legs.

The harness of the artillery is not of the finest workmanship. The collars and pads are heavy and clumsy, and the rope traces so incon-

veniently long, that when a gun is suddenly halted, or is going down hill, they very frequently trail upon the ground and get entangled in the horses' feet. A complete set of new harness for the whole battery is always kept in store to be taken into wear when ordered on service.

I must now devote a few words to the mitrailleuses, of which there are 400 (200 more are ordered) in 50 batteries of eight pieces in the Russian service. The system is the Gatling 10-barrel, somewhat improved in the breech-mechanism by General Gorloff's (the Russian military attaché at Washington) introduction of a screw, worked by a handle, which slowly moves the breech during discharge, about six inches each way. The muzzle, of course, moves in the contrary direction, and thus the lateral range is considerably extended, and, it is asserted, is capable of covering the front of a company of infantry.

The Russian mitrailleuses were ordered in a panic after the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war; and so great was the enthusiasm when they arrived at St. Petersburg, that processions of welcome were organized by ecstatic ladies. Yet, now that calmer moments have succeeded to the startling events of that year, the suitability of mitrailleuses for the field is being seriously considered. The younger school of Officers support them loudly, but the older men hesitate in giving a decided opinion; yet most of them think that the *morale* of an army would be greatly impaired if unprovided with them, if placed in situations eminently adapted for their employment. One of the most difficult questions is, how shall the mitrailleuses be employed. Regimentally; a battery attached to each brigade of artillery; or massed in the artillery reserve to be employed in action at the discretion of the Commander of the artillery? This will be decided this summer, when most important experiments will be made. However, the proposition of allotting two or three pieces to each regiment of infantry has been already negatived, on account of the immense danger they would incur of being captured by a mere handful of horsemen.

The eight pieces of a mitrailleuse battery are each provided with 6,290 cartridges in 262 cases, carried in one ammunition cart. The mitrailleuse cartridge and the cartridge of the new Berdan rifle are interchangeable; a most useful provision in case the supply of either one or the other should run short.

Engineers, Irregular Troops, and Conclusion.

The engineers of the Russian service are still under the leadership of the man whose skill and bravery are as much honoured and respected in foreign countries as in his own—Totleben. Under his direction, old fortresses have been modernised, new fortresses have been built, strong works erected to prevent the new railways from being suddenly seized by a foreign foe; but despite the Polish quadrilateral, the guns of Kieff and Nicolaieff, the Russian engineers, aided by the swarms of infantry soldiers and civilians who are employed to help them, have not arrived at the time to rest from their labours.

There are 11 field Engineer battalions, each of four companies, with 5 Officers, 259 Non-commissioned Officers and men, 2 field, 2 siege, and

6 field telegraph parks. The battalion on the war strength numbers 900 rank and file, and on the peace establishment 600, of both of which, half are sappers and the other half miners.

The Pontoon Train is organised in half battalions, of two companies each. Each half battalion has 26 pontoons and 240 men, of whom half are drivers and the other half pontoniers. On the peace establishment but 60 drivers are retained. In the Russian service there are 312 pontoons.

The Irregular troops form the only branch of the Russian service which we have not yet considered. They consist of infantry, cavalry, and horse-artillery, but the majority belong to one of the two mounted arms—Cossacks of the Don, those tall powerful men on small, lean, hardy, ponies, which they guide with the thinnest of snaffle-bits and single reins, armed with long lance without a pennon, short sword, pistol stuck in the girdle, and rifle in leathern case slung behind, who, creeping silently yet swiftly on to an enemy, are ubiquitous in the field—their ponies' heads almost sniffing the ground—and have become the terror of many a foe of Holy Russia. Their dress is most picturesque. They use no spurs (except in the escort of the Emperor), but have a small lash whip slung on their wrists. They ride admirably, yet with stirrups so short that in winter, when riding in overcoats, and nothing but the calf of the leg is seen, one wonders where they have managed to stow the thigh. Members of a manly race, all of whom are soldiers, associated with, trained to arms, and accustomed to horses from their earliest infancy, always left to shift for themselves, never nurtured in luxury or comfort, these Cossacks of the Don are invaluable troops for escort, police, outpost, foraging, and scouring duty; yet their deficiency in education would probably prevent their performing European cavalry service with the same intelligence as the Prussians did in the late campaign. Their nominal number is 65,000, with 232 guns, yet this might be increased to almost any extent in case of need, for not a man in those provinces but is ready with horse and arms instantly to march to death for his Tsar. They are organised in regiments (polks) of six "hundreds" (sotnias), of which but a few are quartered in time of peace for escort duty in the principal Government towns. These are relieved every three years. During the Crimean war 84 regiments were raised.

But now, having already trespassed too long on your indulgence, I will add but a few words more. I say a few words more, for surely any lecture or paper (whatever you are pleased to term my humble effort,) on "the Russian Army" would be incomplete without a brief reference to those rumours that Russia is about to seek to disturb the peace of Europe, which are constantly taking possession of troubled and imaginative minds. It is not uncommon to be assured by people who expect a storm to gather from every cloud not bigger than even the *little* finger of a man's hand, that the Imperial houses of Romanoff and Hohenzollern are about to league together to wipe the Hapsburgs from the face of the earth, or that the inhabitants of Vienna and Petersburg will shortly be striving to read the public telegrams from the

seat of war, or that the Muscovite hosts are making ready to punish the Teuton armies for their victories on the plains of France, or that each day detracts from the safety of our Indian Empire through Russian aggression. But do these alarmists study the situation? Do they not see that the armies of the Tsar, although numerous, are far from being ready to take the field? that, deficient of the complement of Officers, in the midst of re-arming, and inaugurating a new military organization, with yet imperfect and ill-secured communications, with an empire already too large, and the frontier line which divides it on the west from mighty and intolerant neighbours, but ill defended, with an infantile commerce, promising though it be, utterly unable to stand the rude shock of war, the Cabinet of the Emperor Alexander will do all it can for some time to come to avoid any issue at arms, and will rather entertain measures of internal reform than of territorial aggrandizement, even though it be to secure what is essential to the proper development of Russian commerce, the undisturbed exit of the Black Sea, by establishing Russian dominion at Constantinople, the naturally ruling idea of every loyal subject of the Tsar?

I will now conclude, apologising for the length of time I have kept you, and with the hearty expression of my thanks for the honour you have done me in coming here this day, and for the attention with which you have been pleased to listen to me. To the best of my belief, I have told you plain unvarnished facts. If there be aught in the Russian service worthy of introduction into our incomparably administered Army, you, Sir William Codrington and Gentlemen, are the best judges. I trust, however, that I have succeeded in showing you what a noble army Russia possesses, but that in improving and reorganizing it, she is but acting up to that first article of the political faith of most great Powers, including ourselves, who, however, occasionally doubt its truth, and place the negation before the second verb—“*Si vis pacem para bellum.*”
